

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 are pending and stand rejected. Claims 1-5 and 7 are rejected as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Jost's backup pad with uniformly spaced perforations provided "along the entire surface of the grinding member" (see col. 3, lines 63-64). Jost's perforations insure a continuous suction of abrasive dust through suction bores 7 located in a grinding disc 5.

Claim 1 of the instant application is the only independent claim presented. Claim 1 expressly recites that the perforations (5) are uniformly spaced exclusively within an annular zone 4 located between the center and the circumference of an abrasive disc. Therefore, the "perforations" are not provided along the "entire surface" of the disc unlike Jost. This distinction over Jost is not "merely an obvious matter of design choice" as suggested by the Examiner. Applicants provide the perforations only in an annular zone where the exhaust ports of a typical orbital sander are located; instead of over the entire disc surface. Applicants submit that this is a simple yet non-obvious resolution of the dilemma posed by the need to locate the discs in a specific zone while still leaving sufficient grinding surface to perform efficient grinding. (See page 1, lines 25-29 of the instant application.)

Reconsideration of the rejection based upon Jost is, therefore, respectfully requested.

Claim 6 is rejected as unpatentable over Jost in view of Gutknecht and is dependent in Claim 1 and is, therefore, unobvious over the combination for the reasons given above.

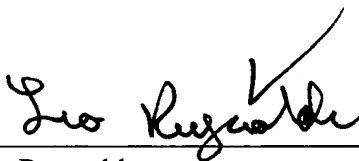
CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (978) 341-0036.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated:

12/19/02